Marriage and What "People Say"

First Khutbah:

Slaves of Allaah! The more avenues are opened for evil, the harder we need to strive in opening gates for good; so, the more facilitated it becomes for people to sin, the more mandatory it is to make the means of attaining virtue possible. If one looks at lusts and desires nowadays, he would be astonished to the different ways used to move them and instigate them. The eyes of the pious are as though being cut by (obscene) pictures flashing everywhere, intermingling and chatting between men and women, ladies not adhering to *Hijaab* (Islaamically prescribed attire for women) in the presence of their relatives, in hospitals, offices, traveling, etc; it is these manifestations that have intensified the fire of desires and kindled its flame. People ask where they should go and what the cure is after their lust and passion have been stimulated, whilst the Jews and their allies continue to make every effort to increase the intensity of this fire even more. Allaah wants to accept your repentance, but those who follow their passions want you to digress into a great deviation, and Allaah wants to lighten for you your difficulties; and mankind was created weak. His weakness is due to surrendering to his desires and passions, which leads him to destruction.

Dear brothers! All praise is due to Allaah, Who made Islaam a perfect and complete religion, in all aspects. There are certain deeds which act as preventive measures before anything evil happens. For example, lowering one's gaze is a precautionary step, as Allaah says that which means: ***"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (i.e., looking only at what is lawful and averting their eyes from what is unlawful.) … And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision …"*** *(An-Noor: 30-31).*

Furthermore, a woman is attracted by men, even though men are more fascinated and affected by women; hence, the prohibition of men segregating with women is another example of a deterrent.

Beloved Muslims! Do you not think that the spreading of impermissible acts necessitates that we re-evaluate the issue of marriage and facilitate it? Corruption is approaching us from all directions, for it seems that what we had on the ground was not enough, that they (the disbelievers) have attacked us even from the skies (i.e., by means of satellites). They have disseminated evil everywhere, to the extent that teenagers are surely exposed to prohibitions through satellite channels and they may even watch pornography; they see naked or virtually nude women on television – what, then, is the solution?

Dear brothers! We must take solid steps towards easing lawful means in this regard. Let us address the subject of the reasonable and proper age for marriage, for instance. There is a lot of misconception amongst people regarding this matter, which has resulted from the propaganda of the West through their movies and articles in magazines and newspapers. Islaam does not forbid marrying off one's daughter at a young age and neither does it allow forcing her to get married. Another thing that must be noted is that there is nothing wrong for the woman to be older than the man marrying her.

What does Islaam instruct? The Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* said: ***"When someone whose religion and character you are satisfied with, asks for your daughter's hand in marriage, accede to his request. If you do not do so, there will be corruption and great evil on***

the earth." This is regarding the way to choose a man; as for the way to choose a woman, he *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* said: ***"Marry the one whose religious you will prosper".*** Indeed, this is how simple the wedding should be. There must be no complications due to age, because the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* married *Khadeejah*, may Allaah be pleased with her, while she was fifteen years older than him, and married *'Aa'ishah*, may Allaah be pleased with her, while she was quite younger than him.

Religious compatibility and qualification is a very important concern, because a sinful person is not fit for a pious woman, as Allaah says that which means: ***"Then is one who was a believer like one who was defiantly disobedient? They are not equal."*** *(As-Sajdah: 18)*. Therefore, it does not reflect sincerity that a guardian marries his pious daughter or sister off to an immoral man, because he is simply not eligible, and also, for the reason that Islaam has appointed a guardian (for a girl) for the validity of the contract, so he may protect her and look after her best interest. Why didn't the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* consider the man's wealth, car or house when he set the condition of accepting the man proposing for marriage? It is the responsibility of the guardian to investigate the situation of the man proposing for his daughter's hand in marriage, because many divorces result due to the fact that the guardian never inspected the man or asked about him before the wedding. It is true that perhaps he may have asked the man's friends at work or a relative regarding him, but they would naturally say nothing but good about him.

Many parents set the condition that the girl must finish her university studies before getting married, which might make them reach an undesired age for men who usually look for younger women. This is a bad habit which people have adopted due to television films and by inventing traditions and customs, for which Allaah has not sent down permission.

Some convictions which women have delay their marriage and they remain unmarried, all of which has a bad effect on men and women. Due to the spread of corruption everywhere in the era we live in some scholars rule that if the woman can only read and write, then she is ready for marriage.

The present situation leaves no room for delay, stating (pointless) demands or hindering marriages. Allaah has made the contract a very simple one. The father or the guardian of the girl says: "I give you my daughter so-and-so in marriage, according to the Book of Allaah and the Sunnah of the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam*", and the man proposing says: "I accept (that)", in the presence of two witnesses and the marriage contract has been effected. It is a very simple and straightforward issue in Islaam, but people make it complex by laying down such conditions, which when they are traced back are found to be based mainly on people's talk and not on the words of Allaah or His Messenger *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam*.

People say, why do you do such and such? People say, Why do you set such conditions for marriage? People say … People say. We are fed up with the concern of what people will say; we only want what Allaah and His Messenger *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* state. We need to free ourselves from social pressures in order to rescue our young men and women.

When Islaam gives authority to the guardian to conduct the contract, it does not mean that he may delay her marriage and deny her marrying a qualified man, because that is forbidden. Islaam deems it great oppression for both the man proposing and the woman, to deprive them

from wedding, without an Islaamically legitimate reason.

Second Khutbah:

Slaves of Allaah! You have observed how Islaam has facilitated marriage and the means to achieve it, and how Islaam has prevented postponing it. Therefore, we must correspond with the objectives which Islaam has come to accomplish… we must see what Allaah wants, what are the objectives in order to fulfill them; if the objective is to facilitate marriage and its means, then we must facilitate it. Whoever tries to set hurdles for marriage, goes against the Islaamic objectives, which is a very serious matter.

On the other hand, when a condition has been agreed upon, it must be fulfilled, because the Prophet *sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam* said: ***"From among all the conditions which you have to fulfill, the conditions which make it legal for you to have sexual relations (i.e. the marriage contract) have the greatest right to be fulfilled."*** Hence, if the stipulation is allowed and not prohibited, one must realize it, especially if he has accepted it. In any case, I advise you to not set such conditions which might make life difficult later.

The man asking for someone's hand in marriage should educate himself about wedding beforehand and know its rulings; thus, he should be mature when he approaches the issue. Many young men go to see the woman with one thing in mind – how beautiful is she? He wonders if she resembles those whom he had seen on a magazine cover, for example. This is the result of not lowering one's gaze, for looking at prohibitions definitely affects people and changes the way they think.

The key to all this is to be content with what Allaah has decreed for you; undoubtedly, everything has a solution in Islaam, but it requires knowledge, wisdom and struggling against people's wrong habits and traditions. It entails that we set a practical example for others by applying Islaamic measures (when marrying) and that we approach the issue with wisdom and reason, by choosing the most suitable spouse and the one farthest from causing problems.

No one would refuse to marry a woman who possesses both beauty and religiosity; in fact, people's desire to marry her becomes even greater. Moreover, if she possesses beauty and wealth, in addition to her devotion to Islaam, she becomes even more desired, but the first criterion must be her commitment to faith.